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Opinions as to Next Year's Election. Opinions of Congressmen and promigent politicians in the States as to the drift of public sentiment concerning candidates and platforms for next year have been published, and they are interesting reading, but they are not

important. The really significant indication is that in both parties the most sagacious and most conservative of the members are giving to the whole subject of next year's election serious attention and more generally and more earnestly than at any recent period of American politics. The complaint so often uttered that the most intelligent of the citizenship and affairs of this country outside of politics was never justified and least of all has

it any justification now. The year which begins on Friday is likely to see developments which will surprise many of the political diagnosticians. It will demonstrate that, after all, the American people have not lost their political sanity and are not in any danger of losing it for the benefit of hands of a court-martial. This we political swashbucklers or incendiaries or social revolutionists.

Three months from now a canvass of opinion concerning the political situation will be far more valuable.

A Highly Creditable Showing for New York.

The death rate for New York for the last year, as calculated by the Health Department, is the lowest in the history of the records of mortality of this city. Up to the close of last week it was estimated at 18.15 in the 1,000 annually, as against 18.75 in 1902, and when the returns for the full year are in it is likely to be even less.

Since 1890 there has been so great and steady a diminution in the percentage of mortality that it indicates a most creditable and most hopeful improvement in the health regulation, and also, and very significantly, in the cleansing of the streets. The death rate of Manhattan and The Bronx was as high as 26.31 in 1891. In 1898, taking in the whole city as now constituted, it had fallen to 20.26, in 1901 to 20, in 1902 to 18.74 and in 1903 it has gone down to 18.15, according to the present calculation.

New York, therefore, now takes its place among the healthiest cities of the world, yet in none other of them do the conditions unfavorable to health present a problem so difficult of treatment. Nothere else is the crowding of population so great as in the densely populated districts of New York. In London, for example, only seven of the twenty-one subdivisions have more than 123 persons to the acre, while the thirty-four Assembly districts of Manhattan average more than 131 persons. The densest London district, with 623 acres, contains only 200.6 persons to the acre. In New York the Eighth Assembly district contained in 1900 as many as 735.9 to the acre, and on 2,626 acres of the city there were more than 200 persons to the acre. About eight hundred thousand persons in New York are housed more densely than the 130,989 inhabitants of the most crowded London

Moreover, the densest London district increased in population none at all or only slightly between 1891 and 1901. while the most congested part of New York, the lower East Side, increased its population between 1895 and 1900 at the rate of 10.6 per cent., and the most crowded district, the Eighth, by 6.7 per cent. This increase, too, has been going on steadily during the last three years. The densest London district has 11.5 persons to a dwelling, but in only two of the Assembly districts of Manhattan, the Twenty-fifth and the Twenty-seventh, is the average lower. Even in Brooklyn as a whole the average number of persons to a dwelling is nearly as large as in the most crowded dwellings of London.

These facts suggest the vastly greater difficulty of the health problem in New York, and added to them is the volume of immigration steadily pouring into the most crowded districts here, while in London that stream is relatively insignificant. Here is a comparison of the present death rate of New York with that of the chief European cities in 1902:

Liverpool........ 22.5 St. Petersburg 23 1'a/14.... 18.4 Rome.

Considering the peculiar social conditions in New York, this is a showing most creditable to our Health and Street Cleaning Departments, and the more so because not many years since New York led the list with its high death rate.

The Dreyfus Case Reinvestigation.

granted that ex-Captain DREYFUS issure the commission to which the matter was referred has reported in favor of submitting to the criminal branch of the Court of Cassation the question whether the judgment rendered by the second court-martial held at Rennes ought to be sustained or to be set aside. Such an outcome of DREYFUS's petition to be reinstated in his former military rank is possible, but not certain.

As we have formerly pointed out, it was merely a preliminary inquiry whether there was a prima facie cause for a revision of the sentence imposed at Rennes, which was referred to a commission composed of three officials in the Ministry of Justice

Jew. Had the commissioners been evenly divided, or even had they differed in the proportion of four to two, as to the conclusion to be drawn from the data laid before them, it is doubtful whether the French Government would have taken any further steps in the affair. Inasmuch, however, as the report in favor of revision was unanimous, it may be assumed that the Combes Cabinet will invite either the whole Court of Cassation-the course pursued on the first attempt to secure the exoneration of DREYFUS-or the criminal branch of that tribunal, as the commission recommends, to say whether the judgment rendered by the Rennes court-martial ought to stand. From the unanimity of the report, it is also a fair inference that the court will answer the question in the negative. It may be expected to say that the judgment should be vacated, either because new and important evidence has been discovered, or because error was committed in excluding certain testimony offered, or because some testimony admitted has since been found to have been false.

A miscarriage of justice having been recognized, there will be open to the court three ways of righting the wrong. A third court-martial may be ordered; or the DREYFUS case may be referred for trial to a civil tribunal; or the Court of Cassation itself, on the evidence before the ablest and most influential in the it, may adjudge ex-Captain DREYFUS innocent of the crime for which he has are neglectful of their political duties been cruelly punished. It is possible that the third course will be adopted as the quickest and most effective mode of extinguishing the affair; but if DREYFUS desires not only to be reinstated in his former rank, but to return to active service, it might be better for him, in view of future intercourse with fellow officers, to obtain an acquittal at the understand to be the specific aim of his

> It may prove impracticable to stifle the DREYFUS affair by a rehabilitation of the victim. Should his acquittal bring about a vehement revulsion of public feeling in his favor, there may arise an irresistible demand that the Generals and War Office officials who conspired to make of DREYFUS a scapegoat, to brand him with infamy, and to consign him to Devil's Island, should in their turn be brought to justice.

The Present Tenement House Law

and Real Estate Interests. Owing to the density of population rents are higher on the East Side of New \$45 a month downtown. A parlor floor apartments in a tenement house erected under the present law bring \$25 to \$35. In old tenement houses, where the apartments are smaller, tenants pay \$20 for four rooms, \$15 and \$16 for three rooms and \$10 for three rooms in rear tene-

standing of the people who inhabit this the present tenement house law was perhaps the toy will sing. Meanwhile, district of high rents. The majority are Jews and Italians of recent immigration. A very small proportion of the 534,000 inhabitants of the lower East Side have lived here more than a dozen years. This means that they are generally poor. The Jews and southern Italians are or destruction of derelicts on the high among the poorest of our alien immigrants. The average amount of money time interests not only of this country per capita shown by them on their arrival but of the whole world. The records at our ports is \$9. These people are forced by their very poverty to settle between 1893 and 1902 three vessels in the high priced tenements of the were lost, thirty-seven were damaged East Side, where, by herding, they out- seriously, and twelve were damaged bid and displace older tenants of a higher slightly by colli ion with wreckage standard of living. They must have the | floating either on the surface or slightly starve; and the character of this work | Steamships and sailing vessels of all binds them by links of steel to the classes suffer from such accidents. In neighborhood.

The East Side is economically an indesingle commercial industry of New York | and nights the voyagers have no prois the dry goods trade. It is the largest | tection against a derelict that rides high market of the kind in the world, equalling out of the water. the combined dry goods markets of London and Manchester. The wholesale ference at Washington discussed the houses devoted to this trade extend from subject of derelict removal, and adopted Duane street to Twenty-third, and from unanimously a report recommending West Broadway to Elm street, a territory two miles long by from one-quarter to one-third of a mile wide, with Broadway as its main artery of business. The obstructions. The conference pointed wholesale dry goods district is largely out the necessity of providing such a covered with huge ten story buildings, vessel, with small boats capable of riding THE SUN yesterday, told of the "rush ormany of which contain as much as 20,000 | heavy seas, because her services would square feet of floor space on each floor. frequently be needed immediately after termination of birds in Texas" is held by The loits in these great buildings are devoted to manufacturing. They are factories which furnish work for the East | ing to Commander SOUTHERLAND, the | nuisance." The Lone Star farmers are said Side tenement population. The wholesale dry goods district is exclusively devoted to commerce and industry. Contiguous to it, between Elm street

tenement district. At no point is this district quite one mile and a quarter wide. Every part of it is within fifteen or twenty minutes' walk of the nearest border of the wholesale dry goods centre. It contains hundreds of modern loft buildings, in lofts formerly occupied as dwellings. The district would be an important seat | sume that the number is large. of the dry goods trade if it were comincludes nearly everything that men ing derelicts, and the plan provides for thing of their compelling power to that fact. and women wear, except shoes. Some the sending of the nearest available to be retried by a civil court because of its branches have their chief centres vessel in search of each reported floatlinen and cotton goods and white wear The Bowery supplies crockery to the This would cost \$175,000.

clothing for sale to the Southern negro.

and of three members of the Court of by piece work. The hours are long and Cassation, one of the latter being a the pay for much of the work is a mere Catholic, one a Protestant, and one a pittance. Ten hours is the legal workday in the factories. Many factory hands take work home with them at the close of the factory day. Children under 16 may not be legally employed in factories unless they can read and write English; none at all under 14. These provisions are evaded in the tenements, where, "the child works unchallenged from the day he is old enough to pull a thread." The hours of work in the tenement homes are regulated only by the necessities and the endurance of the worker. The pay, especially in the cheap clothing trade, is so small that the workday has to be lengthened into the night at both ends, and every competent member of a family has to turn bread winner.

These poorly paid piece workers can least of all spare time for daily travel on street railways. By living downtown a family containing two workers can add, say, \$4.80 a month, representing carfare, to the rent, and gain many hours of time for work. The high rents of the East Side are established by the poorest paid element in its population. There are, of course, many wealthy persons on the East Side-bankers, merchants, manufacturers and professional men, whose business is of a local character and requires a residence there. But the mabulk of the East Side residence population is bound like serfs to the soil by the long hours and small pay incident to the piece work system of labor prevailing in the dry goods trade.

The new tenement house law has made it still less possible for the underpaid piece worker to live away from the East Side than it was before. A rise in rents, due chiefly to the feature of that law which reduced the amount of rentable space obtainable in new tenements, can be made good only by a corresponding lengthening of the hours of toil. On the other hand, the increased cost of living downtown will no doubt have a tendency to induce emigration on the part of people who have remained there from social or religious motives, though no longer economically dependent on the neighborhood.

The reduction in the height limit for new tenements was determined on as a sanitary measure. The advocates of the reduction argued that it would not affect rents, but merely cause a wider distribution of building activity. Events have shown that this view was mistaken. It does not follow, however, that the measure should be repealed. The rise in rents is undoubtedly to a certain extent temporary. Builders have already York than anywhere else in the city for a begun to operate extensively under the given amount and kind of housing. It is new law. The opening of the outlying possible to live in an elevator apartment | parts of the city to settlement through house uptown for the price of a flat in a improved transit facilities will presently made over dwelling on the East Side. exercise a moderating influence on the Single flats of six rooms and bath cost cost of living in the middle grade residence sections. This influence will and basement bring \$60. Five-room hardly extend to the tenement district dependent on the dry goods trade. But in so far as the rise of rents there is permanent, it will tend to check foreign immigration of cheap labor. Net wages will be lower and there will be less room for underbidding to secure work. Meantime, the city is a safer and more whole-It is suggestive to note the economic some place to live in than it was before enacted.

For Systematic War on the Derelicts Congress has now before it a bill, reported favorably by the Committee on Commerce, providing for the removal seas, which is of importance to the mariof the Hydrographic Office show that the fairest weather a submerged wreck may be invi-ible even after she has been pendent industrial town. The greatest struck, and on thick and foggy days

In 1889 the International Marine Conthe construction of a vessel of 800 tons, especially equipped for taking the ocean in bad weather, to clear the seas of these storms. Most of the derelicts start on some judicious observers "to be largely rethe American side of the ocean, accord-United States Hydrographer. He believes that not less than nineteen derelicts are afloat at all times. Some of them continue as a menace to navigation for and the river, lies the great East Side long periods-the schooner Fannie E. commissioner. Henceforth Texas farmers Wolston was adrift for three years and | cannot cat turkey without a tear of regret. six days. The average period of existence adrift for each derelict is approximately thirty days.

How many of the ships that have sailed one can answer. It is reasonable to as-

Under the bill now before Congress pletely isolated from the mercantile the President would have power to detail centre west of Elm street. That trade any national ship to the duty of destroywithin the tenement district. East ing wreck. It is estimated that the Broadway sends clothing, cloaks and explosives necessary to destroy derelicts ants, and the tale shows that he has more furs all over the United States. Division | would cost \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year. The street supplies the South and the West | receipts from the tonnage taxes now with millinery. Allen street is a centre for overrun the necessary expenses of the marine hospitals by \$90,000 a year. A Canal street is noted throughout the special vessel, of the sort recommended South and the East for its peddlers' and by the International Marine Conference, ners public and private, millers and railshopkeepers' stocks; Essex and Orchard | would be built to patrol the steamship | road men, number 273,337. He has station streets for their peddlers' supplies stores. lines from our coast to the Georges Bank.

hotels of the East and the South, and It is hardly to be expected that any Bayard street furnishes second hand other nation will take up the destruction of derelicts off our coast, but by paying ers, whose compensation ranges from \$16.50 Perhaps the greater part of the manu- the expenses of the work out of the ton- a year to \$240 a year. He has a chief of in-

service would pay its cost. The work is 1863 the Department had a Commissioner at a necessary one which should be taken in hand at once.

The Interrogation Mark At Home. The snow was falling woolily; the sky was glaring biliously; the overshoes of a virtuous and toiling population, mainly commuters, were clumping along stolidly, when this communication from the City of Homes drifted into this office plaintively:

" TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: In order to settle an argument, will you kindly let us have your opinion on the following question: Is it wrong for a wife to ask her husband upon his return home after several hours' absence, where he was?

" BROOKLYN, Dec. 29. B. KATZ." Not wrong in itself. The moral philosophers will grant you that. It is no treading upon the corns of the quintessential, abstract and eternal right to ask that delicate question; and curiosity is the mother of knowledge. It is natural that a wife should be interested in the proceedings of her party of the second

part, or fiddle. But here discretion should step in to run the ranch. A household not composed of illuminate seraphim and saints cannot be conducted upon the plan of absolute and total confessions and confidences. Married Man, in his present state, has an aversion to publishing his diary every day. There jority of the employers in the dry goods | must be dark continents, unknown retrade, as well as of the employees draw- gions in the geography of his days and ing weekly wages, live elsewhere. The nights, and it is imprudent for a wife to subject him to the time table. Some smack of liberty clings to him from his unregenerate and unmarried period. Is he to come home and report in full every day or night to his unexpressive She? Is he to say, meekly and duly, "at 5:15 I had a Manhattan cocktail with BILL Jones. We walked up Broadway.

Stopped at EDDIE's, where we met JIM

ROBINSON and TOM SMITH," and so on? The porches of the feminine ear are too delicate to be assailed with such trivial, fond records. A beautiful, trusting nature-every man wants his wife to have and keep that; and there will be the devil to pay in the family when that trust is dead. Besides, it is a peculiarity of Man to object to being questioned. He resents examination. It is likely to make him gruff and reticent. As he is always led by the nose by his wife if she is even passably intelligent, she can afford to humor this little eccentricity. Rain questions upon him and he will only shut up the more tightly and radiate grumpiness. The female trust company must keep a proper reserve. In his own hour and time, if he be left to himself, he will be effusive enough about his movements. The instinct of ancestors probably arboreal in their habits is still strong in him, and he will chatter after the manner of the Bandar Log: but be easy

with him until he has fed. Observe the varying accents of a chant that many men hate to hear:

" Where have you been! "

" Where have you been! " " Where have you been!

" Where have you been? " Never mind. Give it something to eat, Perhaps it is tired. You wanted it to come home, didn't you? Well, it has come. Welcome it. Suppress the strain of indignation. The wise woman hath said in her heart: "All men are children and most men are 'chumps'." When the machine has been greased and stoked, ion't monkey with it.

After "several hours' absence" the heart should grow fonder. How could people live together at all if they had to ive together all the time? Memorandum o wives: Don't ask him too many questions; too much interrogation makes the nose turn up.

" If I were to tell all I know about you. you would be in the penitentiary! " The man who uttered these words was a lawyer, and doubtless he measured them well and knew what he desired them to convey. He was angry when he made the remark, but his feelings were assuaged when he was nominated for the Bench. It is not often work which the East Side offers, or submerged, off the coast of this country. that an acute sense of justice meets with such prompt recognition.

> In figure, face and carriage the turker s a solemn, pompous and absurd fowl. The consciousness of his own tragedy must haunt him. You wouldn't look pleasant if you were to be butchered to make a holiday. Advices from Texas show that this eminent bird has a higher use and destiny than to stuff certain other bipeds. While Texas and Louisiana are helpless before the boll weevil, running to conventions and commissions and appealing to Congress, the cock and hen of Calicut are doing some thing to knock the enemy out. Like JEP-FRIES, the turkey has "a long reach." When the boll weevil "gets busy," the turkey picks it off the top of the stack and gobbles A New Orleans despatch, printed in ders" from Texas for turkeys. "The exsponsible for the increase of the weevil to hold that the turkey is the best guardian of the cotton fields and the most effective warrior against the weevils. With sublime altruism the turkey helps his future slayer and grows fat by his labors as boll weevil

The Hon. WALTER INGLEWOOD SMITH. Representative in Congress from the Ninth Iowa district, made a sufficient reputation from port never to be spoken again are as an effective orator early yesterday mornbesides a vast number of factories housed victims of derelicts is a question that no ling. From the steps of the Court House at Council Bluffs, he spoke to a mob which was eager to lynch two negroes. The mob was persuaded to behave itself. Still, the militia was coming to the Court House on the double-quick while Mr. SMITH was speaking. Perhaps his periods owed some-

The Hon. JAMES WILSON, Secretary of Agriculture, has been counting his assist-Department. On the payrolls of his various bureaus are 4,200 persons, of whom 798 are women. His volunteer observers and correspendents, recruited among farmers, planters, bankers, merchants, cotton ginagents, student assistants, sugar-and-rice region observers, corn-and-wheat region observers, fruit-and-wheat region observers, storm warning displaymen, special river observers and special rainfall observfacturing in the dry goods trade is done | nage receipts the beneficiaries of the secticides, soil physicists, soil scientists. In | clean sweep, he timidly crept into p

its head and twenty-nine persons in its force. In 1861 the Agricultural Division of the Interior Department, the forerunner of the Department of Agriculture, had nin persons on its payroll. One employee has been in the service since 1861.

WHY DO DWARFS EXIST? Reduced Size Due to Race Degeneration

-No Genuine Pysmy Race. TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: Allow ne some words on the question of pathological dwarfs and descendants of pygmies, mentioned in your quotation in to-day's SUN

from the Courrier des Etats Unis. There is no reliable evidence of the exstence of a race of dwarfs since man burled his dead. Earliest man, in fact, was of larger stature than present man. The giant animals which lived in post-glacial times were greatly educed in stature by evolution to those o present times. The mastodon, elephant and he giant llama are instances of this. Neanderthal man was gigantic in stature compared with European man. Brinton claimed that the Japanese were small because of their island life and vegetarianism. All the animals

of Japan are smaller than European. The effect of long continued limited nutrition may be a diminution of stature, symmetrical and without pathological traits. Thus, says the Zeitschrift fuer Ethnologie, 1890, page 441, the extinct elephants of Malta became, toward the close of the life of the species, quite small. A small but vigorous breed o orses is found where food is scarce. In the anary Islands the oxen, horses and the mer become smaller on the smaller islands De Varigny). This explains the origin of the "dwarf races," the Negritos of the Spice Islands, the Orang Paugang of the peninsula of Malacca and the pygmies of Central Africa. Virchow, discussing the dwarfishness of the Lapps, as compared with their cousins, the Finns, pronounces them "Kummerformen, products of wretchedness. The shortest of the Bushmen are also the most miserable those living amid the barren sands of the Kalahari desert. It is not argued that misery alone is the cause of inferior stature, but it is one of the causes, and a potent on Dwarfism is a generational defect of an

ancestor who was goitrous. The goitre gland presides over the growth and development of the individual. The misery of mountain life on the Alps, Pyrences, Andes, &c., and some aeration difficulty due to altitude and drinking of snow water, &c., destroys the human species, not in one generation, but in several or more: dwarfism is merely the evidence of the dying out of the

Tace.
There is no such thing as ethnic anatomy, otherwise the Wormian bones of the Yucan skull would have a racial meaning. Variation is the rule, not the exception, in organic forms, according to Brinton. Not its presence but the absence in the control of the presence but the control of the presence below. its absence is the real problem of biology. Not that the white man has become white and the black man black, but that each remains so, is the true puzzle. For, as Goethe says: "Man makes genera and species; nature makes only individuals."

makes only individuals."

Prof. Miguel Morayta has given a very clear account of the pygmies of the Val de Ribas, who, he says, "are locked upon by their Catalan neighbors as belonging to a distinct race. They are from 4 feet to 4 feet 8 inches in height. A majority of them, when they reach 24 years of age, suffer from goitre, and are called cretins, but cretinism does not attack their larger neighbors—of this same race, mind you—who for many centuries have lived near them. Cretinism in the Pyrenees and Alps, in his opicical is racial in its character, and is not a disease, but a symptom of decadence in a moribund race of dwarfs, who in the recesses of mountains are slowly going through the process of dying out through falling vitality, just as many centuries ago their race must have died out on the plains of Europe and Asia."

Our Panama hats are not made at Panama, but meny of them (these not made at Panama, but meny of them (these not made at Panama, but meny of them (these not made at Panama, but meny of them (these not made at Panama, but meny of them (these not made at Panama, but meny of them (these not made at Panama, but meny of them (these not made at Panama, but meny of them (these not made at Panama, but meny of them (these not mede at Panama, but meny of them (these not mede at Panama, but meny of them (these not mede at Panama, but meny of them (these not mede at Panama, but meny of them (these not mede at Panama, but meny of them (these not mede at Panama, but meny of them (these not mede at Panama, but meny of them (these not mede at Panama, but meny of them (these not mede at Panama, but meny of them (these not mede at Panama). Our Panama hats are not made at Panama, but many of them (those not made by Andeans of Ecuador) are made on the River Garrion, British Honduras, by dwarfs, dying out Latin-Americans.

Americans.
The sound made by dwarfs with their The sound made by dwarfs with their throats, the "dwarf clicks," so-called, is really due to goitrous gland involvement, or undevelopment, which interferes with the due performance of arytenoid cartilages in speech. It sounds like "s" or "ts," pronounced by Haliburton as "pseecht" or "pecht." It is called in South Africa "Bushman clicks." You find them in Honduras, in Yucatan, Guatemals and in India. Goitre and cretinism are earlier chronological states of the dving out of a race whose last stages is

dwarfism.

Brinton denied decidedly the existence of dwarf races. In his review of Quatrefages's "Pygmies," he said: "Probably any people would become dwarfed under certain conditions, and the trait is, therefore, not a racial

would become dwarfed under certain conditions, and the trait is, therefore, not a racial one."

In some of my correspondence with Mr. R. G. Haliburton, the authority on dwarfs, and medallist of the Oriental Society for his great work on dwarfs, I find this: "I have learned through a friend that the manager of the Lilliputian Operatic Company got several very small dwarfs in the Black Forest. Their relatives were generally of ordinary stature. These survivals are like the numerous ones that Prof. Logi found in Sicily and parts of Italy. The influence of atavism accounts for all the cases of dwarfs that are not the results of rickets. You mention as a very odd fact that of the 200 and odd dwarfs in the New York valley, nearly all of them are women. Look over the files of Nature (London), 1893-5, and you will see an account of the dwarfs of a district in Madras described by Col. Fraser, R. A. The dwarfs are all males, who when 6 to 8 years of age stop growing. They marry ordinary sized women and beget children, the daughters are healthy like the mothers, the sons dwarfs and so feeble that the larger people have to support them. It is a singular instance of even a half-breed strain dying out. One would suppose that an infusion of healthy blood from a larger race would counteract the tendency of dwarf races, under uncongental surroundings and using poor food, to degenerate and die cut."

Mr. Haliburton was a fighting believer in the existence of dwarf races, and he thought that the dwarfing was hereditary. Had he considered it rightly, he would have understood that it was merely the symptom or chronological stage of the race's dying out, through several generations, the variation of human species to extinction. This may happen to the whole human family some day, under peculiar geological conditions.

MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY.

NEW YORK, Dec. 27. Why?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sic: Why is it that so many public men, in the highest official places, shipwreck themselves by doing what is so plainly indiscreet that even to the average intelligent citizen it seems in-excusable? Why is it that when they have had ample opportunity to see that the drift of public opinion is setting strongly against them they still persist in a course of action that dooms them to sure defeat?

It is a fact that these foolish mistakes trip up many public men and turn the tide against them far more than do errors of judgment on important political questions. The man who will make the greatest suc-

cess in political life is he who has a level head as to matters which are as plain as day to the ordinary well read citizen It was in this particular that Mr. Lincoln was supreme. During all the terrible atrain of our civil war he never did a fool thing. All of his acts stood the test of criticism of time, and how plainly true it is that it was God's good providence that gave our country just such a man as Lincoln, to hold the confidence of the majority of his countrymen all through that fearful struggle, and to guide this nation patiently and wisely through that long and perilous crisis in our history NEW YORK, Dec. 28. JOHN F. BAXTER

The Oleander Plant.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: For some years I have been studying the effects of the clean der plant on the human system, and have come to the conclusion that it is capable of producing malignant throat and glandular affections and possi-bly cancer. As so much attention is now being given to the latter disease, is it not worth while to restigate every possible source of danger? That the plant has caused malignant diseases know. N. S. STOWELL. TRANECK ROAD, N. J., Dec. 28.

Lawrence was told the Chesapeake had sprung a

"Thank goodness, anyway," he replied, "we on't have to pay a plumber to find it." With a cheerful smile, he allowed himself to be

carried below. Van Tromp had just nalled the broom to the masthead.

"But," argued his officers, "won't that disappoint the people! They might think we are bringing home a hired girl!" however, upon the Dutch passion for a

THE FUTURE OF CENTRAL ASIA. Is the Conquest of Tibet by the British Government Worth While?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: As I resided on the confines of Tibet for some time, and am thoroughly informed as to its physical characteristics and political influence I shall be glad of an opportunity to make a few remarks on the British expedition to bat country.

The distinguished Hungarian traveller, Prof. Arminius Vambery, in a letter to a London paper urges the conquest and permanent occupation of Tibet. But the professor always advised the conquest and annexation of Afghanistan-a course which no living statesman acquainted with the conditions of Central Asia now advocates. How much less the conquest of Tibet!

It is evident that the purpose of the expedition now marching into the territory of the Tibetana is to awaken the Grand Lame

rather than on Russia. It was as far back as the autumn of 1888 that the present Viceroy of India, when a traveller at Tashkent, recorded with sus-picion the arrival of the Russian explorer Gen. Prjevalski at Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, and significantly remarked that it was the fifth semi-political expedition that the Russian General had made to the Tibetan interior, and that he was quite certain that the so-called explorer would never leave Lhasa without some sort of treaty in his pocket. A few months afterward a French

cocket. A few months afterward a French scientific explorer also found his way to Tibet on what, in Mr. Curzon's judgment, was also a semi-political mission.

Events have marvellously developed within the last fifteen years, and now the armies of Japan and England seem to be almost in direct conflict with those of China and Russia with regard to the future of Central Asia. Hence a military expedition is organized in order to make the Tibetans fully conscious of their dependence on the British Empire, rather than on China, or even Russia.

But a conquest of Tibet is not necessary. Unlike Afghanistan, it has no organized army nor is it in any sense a highway to India. No great armies ever crossed Tibet to invade India. Even Jenghis Khan took the circuitous route via Bokhara and Afghanistan, and not the direct route from Mongolia across Tibet. Tibet is most difficult of access on all sides. I am myself thoroughly acquainted with the mountain passes between Afghanistan and India, which are considered most difficult to penetrate and have cost many thousands of British lives, but they are a triffe compared to that chain of mountains which separates Tibet from India, and which consists of high peaks covered with perpetual snow, culminating in Mount Evereat, 29,000 feet above the level of the sea. Even the tableland of Tibet has an elevation of 17,000 feet and its climate is arctic rather than tropical.

Dost Mohammed, the great Afghan Ameer always said he never could inderstand why England should covet his country of rocks and stones. And the Grand Lama in his religious seclusion is doubtless wondering what object the British can have in disturbing his pious peace in a land of mountains and

what object the British Government seized the his pious peace in a land of mountains and snow.

In 1865 the British Government seized the little kingdom of Bhutan on the south of Tibet, and this action was undertaken to enable a British army to locate itself on the Tibetan frontier without scalling the mountains.

The Central Asian policy of Lord Curzon is not that of conquest. He advocates the semi-independence of Central Asian rulers, but insists upon having British Residents at every strategical point. Hence the expedition to Tibet.

As matters now stand, the Kingdom of Tibet, which is about the size of that of Afghanistan, is a menace to the peace of the world and closed against civilization. It is imnossible to fathom the depth of mischief which a little obscure Power like this may accomplish in India when the armies of Japan and England are ranged against those of China and Russia, It can never be forgotten that the English invasion of the Crimaa in 1852 was followed by a mytiny in India in 1857. In Central Asian notities it is always understood that as soon as the plans of Russia are frustrated some subtle move is made by the Muscovite in the direction of India. And it is well known that the Hon. G. P. Curzon, M. P., Fellow of All Souis, Oxford, author of "Russia in Central Asia," was specially selected by Lord Sallahury for the Viceroyalty of India in order to extirnate, root and branch, Russian intrigue from the frontiers of British India.

Lord Curzon's is that of dominant influence

India.

Lord Lytton's mission was that of conquest.
Lord Curzon's is that of dominant influence throughout the whole of Central Asia.

NEW YORK, Dec. 28.

ORIENTALEST.

New Year's Suggestions TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-SIT: If every on riding on the surface cars on Dec. 31 or Jan. 1 would

tised here, if generally advocated it might be NEW YORK, Dec. 28.

TO THE POITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: Thanks for your article in this day's Sun in regard to making New Year's resolutions. The moment a man commences to make resolutions, even if he does break them, there is hope for that man, for ultimately he will keep some of them. A man is not lost to all self-respect when he realizes that he is on the down NEW YORK, Dec. 29.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: Is it not possible to arrange that the blowing of horns and tin trumpets on New Year's eve should be forbidden in the neighborhood of Trinity Church while the chimes are being played?

None of those hideous instruments should be allowed to bray while the chimes are ringing. There should be some chance for those who enjoy the music of the few bells we possess in this city. Considering that, no matter how torturing to the ear is the noise of the New Year horn (by the way, is it a cheap and degenerated surviva of the Jewish custom of blowing a trumpet for the new moon, for solemn feasts?), one has to submit to being made miserable by its being tooted all day long and in every direction when the old year is about to depart, is it too much to ask that those who do not care for chimes, who drown their music in horrible discords, be required to remain at a repectful distance during the short time the bell re being rung? A LOVER OF CRIMES. NEW YORK, Dec. 28.

The Power of Song.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: The experience of Mr. F. M. Palmatier, in his letter in to-day's Sun, concerning the spiritual influence of Gospel singing, cannot be taken as furnishing a criterio

Recently I attended a mission service in Wi mington, Del. A young lady who had devoted her wonderful gift of song to religious service led the musical exercises. Her voice was the sweetest that I had ever heard, not excepting Jenny Lind and Adelina Pattl. And then she we filled with heavenly enthusiasm, so that her notes actually seemed to blend with those of the angels. A redeemed negro minstrel sat behind me had a grand basso profundo voice and was a cult-ured vocalist. He could not stand it and he broke in with a rich, strong bass, and the two sang in

unison.

Then there was a riot of music. It was a Methodist gathering. The old-time Methodists got to shouting, and then jumping. One of the worst men in Delaware joined the band and has turned to God. Saints and sinners shouted hallelujaht and the meeting was kept up till late in the night. I

never saw anything like it.

The writer was almost a reprobate, and those sweet and heavenly notes are ringing in his ears still and have been ringing ever since he heard them; and he weeps as he makes this confession,

wrought by heavenly music. CHARLES E. PORREST.

BROOKLIN, Dec. 29.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: Just not while there is an epidemic of conscience in the land.
I beg leave to ask upon what meat do these victims of conscience feed? How may I get next to them? For about a dozen years I stood at a bank teller's desk, giving and receiving money. It cannot be that I was absolutely accurate all of that time, in all moods and in all weathers: yet never, never did any man, save one, come back and say that I had paid him too much, though so I must have done; for my "balance" at evening was, at times, an abomina-tion to the Lord, for it was "a false balance."
The sole exception was an old soldier of the origi-nal Stonewall Brigade, Charles F. Miller, now of

Cheyenne, Wyo, and I take pleasure in giving his name to Fame, for use in her obstroperous trumpet and to banks for a patron saint. Dwelling, or rather existing, in the perpetual dew of Stonewall Jackson's prayers, no doubt, is what made this one different from other men:

At this blithe season, bending,
I'll whisper to the clod;
To the chill gress where chadows page
And leafees branches med.

That is to say, while men-are running here and there to make restitution, I will keep my ear to the ground to hear if any one. Seeing from his conscience, is coming my way.

Sr. Louis, Dec. 27.

UPRISING OF THE HOTTENTOTS.

The latest reports from the extreme southern part of German Southwest Africa are that the entire Bondelzwarts (black bundle) tribe of Hottentots are in revolt against their German rulers. Earlier rumore were that they had captured the town of Warmbad and were holding the German garrison as prisoners, but this intelligence, from English sources, is discredited in Germany. Serious disaffection exists, however, and, considering the difficulties of getting to this remote region, several hundred miles from the main field of German enterprise and development, the insurrec-

tion may not be easy to suppress The Warmbad district in which the Bondelzwarts live is the most southern part of the Keetmanshoop division of the colony. which is about three-fourths as large as the State of New York. It is very thinly inhabited. In January last year there were only 1,513 white persons in the Keetmanshoop division, of whom about 500 were male adults. There were about 10,000 natives, nine-tenths of whom are Hottentots of various tribes. The Bondelzwarts who live in the Warmbad district number only about. 1,800 to 2,000 persons. About 300 of them live in Warmbad, which has been a missionary station since 1805. The white population of this town last year was 182 civilians, of whomall but 41 were immigrants from Cape Colony. The German garrison numbered about 200 soldiers or nearly a third of the military force maintained in the colony.

The district of Warmbad is one of the most desolate parts of Africa outside of the deserts. Most of it is a high, waterless plateau, and the only redeeming feature is the valleys of a few rivers whose waters may be led over the adjoining lands, fitting them for pasturage and crops. This facil ity has tempted several scores of farmers to scatter over the district and raise cattle and

Unfortunately, the Warmbad district has suffered from a great drought for several years, and this calamity is at the bottom of the present disturbances. The few streams have been almost dry. The white farmers, who occupy the most favorable situations in the valleys, have had difficulty in procuring sufficient water for their cattle. The Bondelzwarts have suffered even more severely. They are cattle raisers as well as hunters, and much of their stock has perished. Letters received in Germany up to September said that some of the Hottentots had died of hunger. They are in a desperate condition. They regard the whites as having crowded them out of the best parts of the country. This is the reason they have turned against the newcomers. While the whites have been living in comparative comfort, their own women and children have been suffering. Their insurrection is a war for food and only

incidentally for other kinds of plunder. The German port of Warmbad is Luderitz Bay, but it is hundreds of miles away. Warmbad can be reached from the other white settlements of the country only by messenger service or weeks of weary plodding in oxearts; and the difficulties of communication are now intensified by the prevailing drought. Communication with Cape Town is far easier, and this is the reason why the meagre information with regard to the revolt has thus far been wholly derived from British sources.

BOARD OF ESTIMATE GOES OUT. Thanks the Mayor for Courtesy and He Says "Happy New Year."

Mayor Low's Board of Estimate held its less meeting yesterday. Before the adjournment President Cassidy of Queens proposed and President Swanstrom of Brooklyn seconded this resolution:

That the thanks of the Board of Estimate be extended to Mayor Low for his uniform courtesy to the members of this board while acting as its presiding officer. give the conductor, once at least during those days, five cents in addition to his fare, there would be a good sum for division among motormen and conductors at the close of that period.

While this plan has been put into execution in other cities, and to a certain exteen has been practited been the regardly advented to missing as its presiding officer.

"I am much obliged to you, gentlemen, and I wish you all a happy New Year," there its expensive advented to missing the missing of the conductors.

"I am much obliged to you, gentlemen, and I wish you all a happy New Year," there its expensive advented to missing of the missing of the missing of the extended to mayor Low for his uniform courtespy to the members of this board while acting as its presiding officer.

"I am much obliged to you, gentlemen, and I wish you all a happy New Year," the Mayor replied.

Among the appropriations made by the board were \$1,000,000 for the Aqueduct Commission, \$70,000 for a site for a new and \$92,669 for new school sites in Brooklyn

TAX OFF HIS CONSCIENCE.

Brooklyn Man Contributes \$71.38 to the \$6,148 Conscience Fund of 1903.

Enclosed with a post office order for \$71.38 Comptroller Grout received yesterday this letter from a conscience stricken citi-SIR: Conscience compels the writer to

SIR: Considerate continues the whiter to synology for taxes 1903 on \$5,000 at regular rate, \$70.68, and 1 per cent. penalty, .70, total \$71.88, for which amount please find enclosed (by registered mail) P. O. O. No. 36584. Issued by Brooklyn (Station W), N. Y., to Isldor Jonas assumed name of sender). In 1902 Mr. Grout received conscience money \$190.50. This year he has received \$8.148, of which \$5,000 came in one lump.

The Lost Article.

To the Editor of The Sun-Sir: Will you give me the benefit of your opinion of the apparently growing fad for suppressing our old friend, "the in sentences such as "He plays organ but can't play plano." "She plays harp in orchestra." "She rides bleycle." DAILY READER. NEW YORK, Dec. 29.

Is there such a fashion of speech? not? The two main forces of civilization at present are football and "bridge," and they re played without the article. Naturally their influence robs other things of their article. But why worry? Tis strange the soul, that very flery particle,

Should let itself be snuffed out by an article.

Labouchere on Wilhelm I. R. From London Truth.

There is an individuality about him that attracts He seeks to excel in every art, and his lively genius enables him to become, if not a master, at least a creditable proficient in almost all. Whether he really believes in his right divine to rule is per haps doubtful, but most undoubtedly he is an able though he is sometimes a little indiscree in his language and lays down the law before he has fully thought the subject out. Generally speaking, however, he takes a broad, statesman like view of things, and he has done much to gal vanize the dormant energies of his countrymen in trade and manufacture and to make his empire a

great workshop.

We blame him for insisting upon a strong navy But, were we Germans, I do not think that we should question that this is almost a necessity if Germany is to become what she alms to be. So. too, in regard to the army. Germany has no natura frontiers. She is surrounded by Powers that were they to combine, would probably crush her She knows that she holds Alsace and Lorraine by the sword, and that, however peaceful a French tory were Germany engaged in a serious contest with any of her other neighbors. The mistaker olicy of annexing these provinces, for which the present Emperor was not responsible, imposes on him the necessity of a strong and effective army. The dimeulties of Germany are great, and the

considerable ability in meeting them.

From the Liverpool Post.

An extraordinary incident, alleged to have occurred on Friday last, has caused an immense sencurred on Friday last, has caused an immense sensation in Betheada. On that day, while a woman was washing her three-months-old child, so the story goes, she was thunderstruck to hear the baby say, "Blwyddyn of nadwy fydd y flwyddyn neast, mam," which, roughly translated, means "Next year will be a terrible year, mother!" In her astonishment and terror, the mother laid the child down and ran to a neighbor's house, an woman there of the occurrence. The woman rea into the house, and, picking the child up, soothed ran into the house, and, picking the child up, soothed and caressed it awhile, and then, haif playfully, half in earnest, she said to the child, "Did you tell your mother that next year would be a terrible year?" To her unbounded assonishment the child replied "Yes," and fell back dead. The child was buried on Saturday afternoon, in the presence of large crowds, who discussed the story and are spreading it far and wide.